

EFFECTIVENESS OF THE BILINGUAL DICTIONARY IN ADDRESSING THE PROBLEMS OF THE LEARNERS OF ST COMMUNITY

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ABSTRACT

This paper focuses on the intervention extended to develop the competency of the first language i.e. Odia among the low proficient students of Class- V. The objectives of the study were (a) to identify the difficulties faced by the students of class-V in relation to reading and reading comprehension (b) to develop the strategy for improving the language competency relating to reading and reading comprehension of class-V students (c) to study the effectiveness of the Bilingual dictionary and other language activities in improving their language competency. So far as the background of the study, the students in the tribal pocket were weak in relation to reading and reading comprehension in the first language i.e. Odia. At the outset, a diagnostic test was conducted to identify the specific learning difficulties of ST learners. The test was based on the content of the first language (Odia) both in oral and written form. Oral questions consisted of word recognition, pronunciation, and the written questions focus on reading comprehension. The pre-test result revealed that they were deficient in reading aloud and pronunciation and proved very poor in reading comprehension. Most of them were using their own language instead of standard language. There were acute learning problems in using standard language at the time of speaking and writing. In order to help them, to overcome the language difficulties in relation to pronunciation and comprehension of the topics in the Odia textbook, the researcher was developed a Bilingual dictionary covering some contents of the Odia textbook. A bilingual dictionary contains two types of words of own language and standard language limited to two hundred (200) words. In the first phase of the experiment, the Bilingual dictionary was tried out to know how far it is communicable and comprehensible. Then Bilingual dictionary, language games, language riddles and puzzles, folk tales, picture cards, word cards, sentence cards, paragraphs and paper cuts from different children Magazines like Meena bazaar, Jahna Mamu, Shishu Raija, Phulajhari, Chhutidina etc. were collected for using during the classroom of the process. The intervention was continued for one month on the selected sample. It was a single group pre-test post-test experimental design. The Tools like Pre and Post-test oral and written, Worksheets, observation schedule and checklist, were used. The Sample consisted of 25 nos. of ST students of class V studying in a rural primary school of tribal belt who were selected purposively to conduct the study. At the initial stage, 30.25% of the students could recognise the words correctly, 36.67% of the students pronounce the word correctly, 40.32% of the students read the text, and 41.62% of the students give the answer to comprehension questions but after the intervention, it was found that in word recognition, word pronunciation, reading and reading comprehension there was 60.7%, 64%, 62.75% and 65% respectively. The intervention exerted a positive impact on the students' word recognition, pronunciation reading and reading comprehension. Those students who are not secured satisfactorily needs furthermore extra classes.

KEYWORDS: *intervention, scheduled tribe students, reading comprehension, achievement, bilingual dictionary*

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INTRODUCTION

Every child of the age of six to fourteen years shall have a right to free and compulsory education in a neighbourhood school till completion of elementary education [Chapter No. II Part 3 clause (i) RCFCE, 2009]

Since the dawn of the enforcement of the constitution of India constant endeavours have been made by the Union Govt. with the collaboration of state Govt. to ensure universalization of elementary education. As education is the spinal cord of society and the foundation of democratic system, it is essential to ensure hundred per cent literacy in democratic settings. Particularly to bring the backward categories into the national mainstreams through educational upliftment is the primary moral and constitutional responsibility of government.

According to the National Curriculum Framework (NCF), 2005, "Nurturing and Enabling Environment plays an instrumental role in enhancing academic skills of the learners". The versions of National Curriculum Framework, 2005 based on a study report reveals that the unsatisfactory achievement levels of Academic linguistic proficiency in the first language. There are data to show (Nag-Arulmani 2005) that 40% of children in small towns, 80% of children in tribal areas and 18% of children in urban schools cannot read in their own language. At the primary stage, these disparities widen and tend to general academic failure at a later stage. In respect to Language, Language learning and language acquisition are two important things which play an instrumental role in learning language. Language acquisition occurs in an informal way, where a student learns language in a natural way i.e. in a familiar and homely atmosphere. It is possible in the case of the mother tongue. It is because most of the time he is exposed to the language in his home surrounding, listening to the words from his parents, brothers, sisters and relatives in the home environment, repeated listening words, sentences and learning by imitation makes the bond with the words and utterances stronger. But language learning occurs in a sequential manner or an organised way. In tribal areas, they are first-generation learners. These students are basically well-versed in their home language. They communicate with their local language. They cannot speak and understand the standard Odia Language which is used in the textbook. In textbooks, there is also no scope for their language. They feel that the textbook is a demon and school is the place of aliens. In this context, their performance shows very poorly in both curricular and co-curricular areas.

Context

The study was conducted in an adopted school of Bissamcuttack block of Rayagada district in Odisha, which is one of the backward districts predominated by the Tribal like **Kandhas and Souras**. Major percentage of the people of this district is Kandha and its sub-sections and their local language is 'Kui' or 'Kuvi'. The ST population of the district is 56% of the total population in Rayagada district. The total literacy rate of Rayagada district is 49.76%. The male literacy rate is 51.27% and the female literacy rate is only 33.43% which is less than the average literacy rate of 72.87% of the state.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The objectives of the study were:

- To identify the difficulties faced by the students of class-V in relation to reading and reading comprehension.
- To develop the strategy for improving the language competency relating to reading and reading comprehension of class-V students.
- To study the effectiveness of the Bilingual dictionary and other language activities in improving their language competency.

HYPOTHESIS

The following directional hypothesis has been formulated for this research project on the basis of the objectives stated above:

- The adopted strategy will exert a positive impact on students' achievement in reading and reading comprehension of the text of First language Odia.
- The ST learners will be able to read and answer the comprehension questions of the text in standard language to an expected level.

DELIMITATION

The study is confined to the class –V students (ST community) of Bissamcuttack block of Rayagada district and the language competency in First language Odia, i. e. Reading and Reading Comprehension will be developed.

METHODOLOGY

DESIGN: It was a single group Pre-test and Post-test experimental design.

SAMPLE: The Sample consisted of twenty (25) nos. of ST learners of Class-V who were selected purposively to conduct the study.

TOOLS: The Tools like Pre and Post-test oral and written teacher made questions, Worksheets, observation schedule and checklist, etc. were used.

STATISTICAL TECHNIQUES: Calculation of Percentage and Mean were used for analysis and interpretation of data.

PROCEDURE OF THE STUDY

At first, a pre-test was administered to the class- V students. The question items were based on reading a paragraph, identifying the main ideas, characters and arranging the ideas or thoughts in a sequence manner. After that, the answer sheets of the students were checked by the researcher to find out the level of understanding of the text or the theme. Out of the 20 students some students were failed to answer the questions correctly and a few students were able to respond to the partly corrected answer of the questions & a very few students were able to write the answer correctly. Those students who were performed very low, actually could not understand the text or topic because they were not well-acquainted with the book language or standard language, Odia.

Taking the above situations the researcher had designed the following strategies for developing the reading and reading comprehension of the students. Teaching Learning Process continued for four weeks consecutively. In a work-shop mode, the researcher has developed a Bilingual dictionary with the help of D. EL.ED student teachers belong to ST community i.e. Kandha and whose language is 'KUI', covering some contents of the Odia textbook. Bilingual dictionary contains two types of words of own language or the local language i.e. KUI and standard language limited to two hundred (200) words. In the first phase of the experiment, the Bilingual dictionary was tried out to know how far it is communicable and comprehensible. During the practice teaching of the student teachers, the developed package was tried out basically in language learning. Then Bilingual dictionary, language games, language riddles and puzzles, folk tales,

picture cards, word cards, sentence cards, paragraphs and paper cuts from different children Magazines like Meena bazaar, Jahna Mamu, Shishu Raija, Phulajhari, Chhutidina etc. were collected for use during the intervention.

All the students were divided into five groups. In five groups two categories of students were clubbed for peer-supported learning under the guidance of the investigator. Each learning session was evaluated instantly followed by remedial intervention.

ACTION PLAN

About the Remedial Package: It consists of the following parts; such as

- The first part deals with reading comprehension in respect of short stories, paragraphs, poems and some ethical notes.
- Use of children's magazine, newspapers cuttings, Educational journals for children like Jahna Mamu, Kunikatha, Shisu Raija, Meena Bazar, Amarisatya Odia magazine, Sunday Odia Newspapers, Ravivar Samaj, Chhutidina, Pilanka Dharitri, Sambad, Prameya etc.
- Use of Odia Dictionary and Bilingual dictionary
- The last part deals with the correct use of punctuation marks.

Classes were taken over a period of four weeks i.e. one month using the remedial strategy/ package followed by practice activities.

Class Room Practices:

(a) First Week – Picture Comprehension

Firstly pictures of one prose “SUKHILA PATRARA KATHA” and poetry section “FULA” were displayed to the students and they were asked to respond to the following questions in their mother tongue:

- What do you see in this picture?
- What is the picture of it?
- What is the picture about?
- Who can guess the topic of your language text book?
- Can you tell the name of the topic?

(b) Second Week: (Reading Comprehension)

One topic from prose section “SUKHILA PATRARA KATHA” and one from the poetry section “FULA” were selected in the class. One paragraph in Xeroxed form was distributed among the students who sat in small groups each consisting of four in numbers. The teacher gave the instruction before the conduct of activities in groups. The classroom transaction was in mother tongue both in the local language and Odia.

- Read the material silently.
- The teacher supplied the picture cards and word cards of the unknown content words of the topic.

- Then they were instructed to guess the meaning of the words underlined and search the words from the bilingual dictionary.

It was observed that few numbers of students could guess the meaning of the difficult words.

Treatment: Search the word from bilingual dictionary. Choose the meaning of the words from the given multiple items. Discuss among your friends. The high achievers were instructed to extend necessary help to the low and mediocre learners. It was seen that the slow learner and mediocre could do a little better than before.

(c) **Third Week:** A second passage/stanza in Xeroxed form was given to each group and the students were instructed to do the following activities.

- Mark the passage/ stanza into segments to show breaks between the ideas.
- Guess the meaning of the underlined words using the clues given in the bracket.
- Look at the meaning of the words from glossary notes of the text book.
- Sequence the sentences as per the paragraph/ text.
- Locate the specific information as given below the passage.
- Identify the sentence which expresses the gist of the paragraph. / locate the main idea in the paragraph.

One passage from a prose lesson and one from the poetry lesson were dealt with in the class. Then they were instructed to do as the investigator did in the example. The students were made familiar with the use of dictionary and VMDT to comprehend the text easily.

(d) **Fourth Week:**

The VMDT technique was adopted for comprehend the text easily. The students are asked to read the topic and asked different tricky questions like:

- How many paragraphs are there in the topic?
- How many sentences are there in the first paragraph?
- What is the main theme of the topic?
- What is the first paragraph about?
- How many times the word “GURULULA” is used in the whole topic?
- What is the last sentence of the topic? etc.

Similarly in poetry piece this technique is also used for better comprehension of the text. The students were encouraged to give the answer with their local language and standard language.

Besides that different short stories, riddles, rhymes etc. were used from different children magazines, newspapers during the intervention.

After that, the students were asked to do different activities like 'Fill in the blanks', 'Rearrange the sentences to get the correct stanza of the poem', 'associate the picture with the stanza of the poem', 'Rearrange the picture with sequentially as the stanza of the poem', 'supply some key words to write a poem' etc,

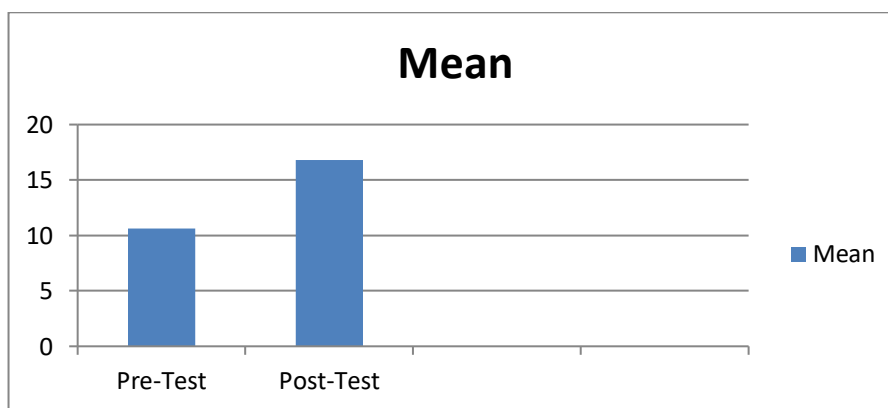
The intervention was continued for one month followed by different types of innovative learning materials, practice activities and evaluative activities. Then the post-test was conducted. 't' test was computed for finding out the significance of difference in mean scores between pre-test and post-test activities.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Table- 1: (Comparison of Result of Pre-Test & Post-Test)

TEST	N	MEAN
Pre-test	25	10.6
Post-test	25	16.8
Difference		6.2

Graphical Representation of Mean Score



It is revealed from the table and graphical representation that the performance of the students in relating to reading and reading comprehension of text. The Mean value of the pre-test was 10.6 while the mean value of the post-test was 16.8. It was found that the mean score of the post-test was higher than that of the pre-test Mean score with an additive gain of 6.2. It became possible because of the designed activities in language. The guided dialogue practice helped them in developing the speaking skill of the target group. Thus it was proved that the adopted strategy had a positive effect on learners' achievement in reading and reading comprehension in first language Odia.

Table- 2: Comparison of Results of the Pre-test and Post-test in the sub skills of language:N=25

Sub- Skills	Before Intervention	After Intervention
	Correct responses in %	Correct responses in %
Recognize the words correctly	30.25%	60.5%
Correct Pronunciation of the words	36.5%	64%
Reading with pause intonation and stress	40.32%	62.5%
Sequentially arrange the ideas as in the text/ paragraph	30%	61.5%
Comprehension	41.62%	65%

The above table reflects that the performance of learners in reading aloud with pause, stress and intonation, Reading with correct pronunciation, Sequentially arrange the ideas as in the text/ paragraph and Locate/ identify the central idea and sub ideas of the text were 30.25%, 36.5%, 40.32% and 30% respectively before intervention. After intervention, the performance of learners in Reading aloud with pause, stress and intonation, Reading with correct pronunciation, Sequentially arrange the ideas as in the text/ paragraph and Locate/ identify the central idea and sub ideas of the text were 60.5%, 64%, 62.5% and 61% respectively. It proved that the adopted strategies have a positive effect on the increasing achievement of the learners in reading and reading comprehension of the text.

FINDINGS

Due to the use of Bilingual dictionary (kui-odia) particularly in clarifying the meaning of the content words, it was easier for the students to comprehend the text. The performance was satisfactory in comprehension and the correct pronunciation was also found better than before. The students could read and respond to the comprehension questions very well.

- Strategies used by the researcher were useful and benefitted the learners to enhance their skills and sub skills of language learning.
- It was found that the performances of students in reading and reading comprehension skills were improved after the intervention.
- Student teachers are motivated towards the teaching learning process.
- During the intervention, they spontaneously participated and enjoyed the activity a lot.
- Remedial materials proved useful.
- The strategies adopted for improving the achievement level of the learners proved effective.
- Period-wise monitoring supported by instant remediation proved useful.

CONCLUSIONS

Learning becomes successful when the learners' involvement and participation are ensured. As the teacher is the pivotal thing in the teaching learning process, it is the duty of a teacher to be updated and innovative so that he can motivate the students as per the learners need. In a classroom situation, an open period will be given in the time table where students can talk to each other in Odia language and other non-tribal students also can talk with their local language. As mother tongue is not a hindrance for the learning of other languages, it can help to learn other languages more easily and effectively. More importance should be given to the ST community students. Their culture, festivals, folk songs and folk- tales can also be used in school activities so that they will be encouraged and motivated to learning and their regularity in attendance will be increased and they will be streamlined in the mainstream.

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ANNEXURE

PICTURE OF LANGUAGE RESOURCE ROOM OF TRIBAL

